Library
Dept. of Labor
Washington 25, D.C.

LIBRARY
FEB 4
DEPT. OF LABOR

FARM LABOR NEWS

Vol. 6, No. 1 — Washington, D. C., January, 1951 — 50 Cents Per Year

Little Children Come Unto Me

Representatives of industrialized farming are out to set aside the child labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1949, to enable them to exploit the labor of little children in their huge factories-in-the-fields.

The hand of greed was revealed by Chairman Stephen Pace of Georgia at an executive session of the Sub committee on Farm Labor December 7th in Washington. (An executive session is one that is closed to the newspaper men.) Said Congressman Pace, soon to become the highly paid Washington lobbyist for the nation's suitcase farmers, "I have always been concerned with the education of children but at a time when men's lives are being sacrificed, I see no reason that children should not do their part in national defense by working on farms." Pace then called upon an attorney for the U.S. Labor Department to prepare standby legislation for the House Committee on Agriculture to undo the years of work of organized labor and social welfare agencies to stop the exploitation of children in the factories-in-the-fields.

The thinking of the men who pass the nation's laws affecting agriculture was further revealed by this sub committee on farm labor when Pace told Don Larin, head of the Farm Placement Division of the U.S. Employment Service, that his agency was expected to bring in as large a number of Mexican agricultural workers as possible this year for employment by corporation farm operators. Larin protested that it was a hard job since the Mexican government refused to agree to permit their citizens to come to the U.S.A. without guarantees as to wages and working conditions. Congressmen Poage of Texas then became very angry and demanded to know if the U.S. government was giving money to Mexico. He also wanted to know if the Mexican government could not be forced to send their nationals to the U.S.A. to earn money on farms. Still another member of the Committee wanted to know if the men and women from Mexico could not be brought into the United States and be required to leave their children at home. Poage thereupon remarked that there was no point in sending Mexican children to school, that they should work in the fields.

The session was closed to representatives of the National Farm Labor Union, AFL, but the Associated Farmers, the Farm Bureau, the National Canners Association and other anti-labor outfits were well represented.

Resolved:

THAT I will attend my local union meetings.

THAT I will take an active part in union affairs.

THAT I will sign up all the new members I can.

THAT I will support to the full all efforts of organized labor to improve living standards and to bring peace to the world.

THAT I will be a full-time citizen and be active in the affairs of my community and keep myself informed about my country and the world.

These things I resolve to do in 1951 because I am a trade unionist and firmly believe in the world-wide program of the Free Trade Unions to bring FREEDOM, PEACE and PROSPERITY to all mankind.

Go Preach The Gospel

A young fellow down South claimed that he had seen a sign in the sky which read G.P.G. and applied to his church for a license to preach, claiming that the letters meant "Go Preach the Gospel." He was given an examination by the church elders on his knowledge of the Bible. He attempted to prove that the sign meant what it said by showing off his knowledge of the Good Book as follows:

"A certain man went from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves. They beat him and they kicked him and they leave him to die. And the Queen of Sheba, she come by. She give him a hundred changes of clothes and a thousand dollars in gold. And he jump in her chariot and away they go skylarking off in the woods where his hair got caught on a limb of a big oak tree. There he hung. And the three Wise Men they come by and cut him down. And it rained for 40 days and 40 nights and he went into a cave and hid himself. Then the raven came and fed him on locusts and wild honey.

"And when it quit raining there come a man and say to him, 'Come with me to supper,' and he say, 'I can't. I done married me a wife and the seven foolish virgins done burned up all the oil.' So he went out on the highways and found Daniel in the lion's den. And he say to Daniel, 'Daniel, put on your coat of many colors and let's go to Jerusalem.' Daniel did and he did.

"And when they got there they see Queen Jezabel a settin' up high in a window. She laugh at him and make him mad and he say, 'throw her down' and they threw her down seven times, and then he say, 'Throw her down some more' and they throw her down seventy times seven times and of the fragments, they pick them up in 12 baskets. And then he say, 'She got so much curiosity I just gotta turn her into a block of salt.' And he did. Now she is the salt of the earth and now I say unto your brethren, that's the reason we worships God and loves women."

The elders of the church told the would-be preacher that the sign he saw was G.P.C. and meant—Go pick cotton.

Annual Financial Report of the National Farm Labor Union

BALANCE SHEET
NOVEMBER 30, 1950
EXHIBIT A
ASSETS

Current Assets		
Cash on Hand and in Bank	$1,747.84	
Membership Per Capita Dues Receivable	3,200.00	
Taxes Receivable—U. S. Treasury Dept.	92.45	
Total Current Assets		$5,040.29
Fixed Assets—At Cost		
Office Furniture & Fixtures	$ 997.61	
Less—Reserve for Depreciation	201.60	
Total Net Book Value		796.01
Charters and Organization Expenses		105.00
Total Assets		$5,941.30

(Continued on Page 3)

Wages Cut By Mexican Nationals

San Francisco—The wages of domestic farm workers employed by one firm in the San Jose area were cut from 80 cents to 75 cents an hour as Mexican nationals were brought in during the first two weeks of December, Ernesto Galarza, research director of the AFL National Farm Labor Union, charges.

Mr. Galarza asked Governor Warren for a full and public investigation of the whole situation.

About 150 Mexican nationals arrived in the Santa Clara Valley; they had been hired at 75 cents an hour. Contrary to the arrangements made last fall, the employment service failed to check with the National Farm Labor Union office in the area as to the availability of labor prior to arranging for the importation of Mexican nationals.

Prior to the arrival of these Mexicans the current wage for domestic workers, most of whom are of Mexican origin, had been 80 cents cutting broccoli. Farmers hired the nationals at 75 cents and then announced that all wages would be "stabilized" at the same figure, or 5 cents less than domestic workers were currently receiving.

The international agreement between the United States and Mexico states that nationals are to be paid the prevailing wage. Obviously, the contrary is becoming true. Domestic workers are to be paid the wage prevailing for nationals.

Big Farmers Ask Money Import Labor

The U.S. Employment Service's special farm labor committee composed of large farm operators from each of the 48 states, has asked that Congress appropriate money to recruit and transport farm labor from Central and South America. The request was made to the House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture soon after the new Congress met.

The big farmers would authorize the Secretary of Labor to transport workers from Latin America if the employer has offered American workers the same conditions as offered foreign workers, and American citizens are unobtainable. The suitcase farmers suggest that Congress also provide that this program shall not otherwise affect wages and working conditions of Americans.

Health and medical care from the place of recruitment to the place of employment would also be provided by the Labor Department. Americans may also be transported within the United States if any are willing to work under the same conditions as foreign nationals.

Notes From California

By HANK HASIWAR

William Becker, national representative of the Union in Bakerfield, reports on how union farm workers voted in some of their precincts. In the Delano area, James Roosevelt and Helen Gahagen Douglas ran well ahead of their opponents by more than 4 to 1. Arvin, Lamont and Cottenwood in Kern County ran the same way. Reports from other areas where farm labor union locals are located also indicate the same.

Becker reports that importation of Mexican nationals into the Porterville area, an orange growing center, has been stopped by the determined efforts of the local union in that area. The Union here not only vigorously protested the importation of several hundred nationals into this area through the press and radio but also supplied the California Employment office with a list of orange pickers in the area who could more than make up the so-called "labor shortage."

Ernesto Galarza reports that in the Salinas Valley he found one camp with 150 Mexican-American families, 80% of whom were unemployed. The growers here imported several hundred Mexican nationals and took American workers off the jobs. The Mexican nationals are working for 60-65 cents an hour. The unemployed Mexican-American farm workers in this area where the union wage is 90 cents are out in the fields picking mushrooms to feed their families.

Galarza also reported that in the Imperial Valley, the winter vegetable growing area of California, 4,000 Mexican nationals were imported in November. The Mexican nationals are working for at least 30 cents an hour less than the domestic farm workers. Also, the growers are running buses to pick up Mexican illegal workers (wetbacks) and taking them to the Mexican consul where they are legalized. Not only this, but Red Harrigan who is on the payroll of the Imperial Valley Farmers Association, Imperial County and the state of California, is in Hawaii trying to recruit more labor to bring into the area.

Yet last winter, 14 babies of families of unemployed farm workers in California starved to death.

William Swearingen, Fresno County organizer for the Union, reports that he expects to supply labor to prune vineyards for some 60 small farmers in the area. Swearingen says that excellent relations exist between the Union and the small farmers. A joint legislative program is being worked out with this group of raisin growers to help the small farmers in getting legislation that will protect them from bankruptcy in case of disaster. Labor and the small farmers feel that the Bank of America has gobbled up enough of them and that it is now time to stop.

The National Farm Labor Union is very happy about this development in Fresno because it feels that the farm workers and the working farmers should be linked together to prevent their destruction by the land hogs.

Swearingen also reports that Fresno County failed to get the $100,000 suit the Union has against them transferred from San Francisco to Fresno County. The Associated Farmers who run the Board of Supervisors in Fesno County would certainly like to have the case tried in Fresno County where one of their friendly judges can try it. We all know who would win under those conditions.

The year 1951 promises to be a hot one in California—and we are not speaking of the climate. Farm workers in California will be in a battle for their very lives. The Associated Farmers and their political stooges are working to swamp the California farm labor market with thousands of Mexican nationals—both legal and illegal.

An indication of what might happen is the sudden move on the part of the corporation farmers in the Santa Clara and Salinas Valleys in bringing in several hundred Mexican nationals at a time when American farm workers are clamoring for jobs at decent wages. Worse yet, as soon as the growers pulled in the Mexican nationals, they cut wages. In Salinas the farmers cut the wages from 32 cents to 27 cents a crate. In Santa Clara County the farmers cut wages from 80 cents to 75 cents per hour.

And even worse, in the Imperial Valley the Imperial Valley Farmers Association imported 8,000 Mexican nationals to work at 60 cents per hour. In the Imperial Valley last year, between the Mexican nationals imported under a contract and the Mexican workers here illegally (wetbacks), more citizens of the Republic of Mexico worked in farm labor than citizens of the U.S.A.

The corporation farmers through their powerful and rich lobbies in Washington, D. C. intend to use war mobilization of manpower as an excuse to import 400,000 Mexican nationals. Most of these will be brought from Mexico with a large number from as far down as Brazil in South America. The importation of 400,000 Mexican nationals, which is more than 4 times as much labor as was imported in the last war, will move every American farm worker clear out of Southern California. Northern California will be flooded by the labor which will move up from the south. Mothers and fathers of farm workers who have had their boys fighting in Korea will be American Displaced Persons of the mobilization age.

Obviously the farmers are determined to wipe out the National Farm Labor Union in California. They are learning to fear it. Last year the Farm Labor Union beat the corporation farmers in the beet, potato, tomato and cotton crops. In each of these crops the workers received higher wages and working conditions were improved through the Union's efforts. The corporation farmers know that this year the Union will still move ahead unless they block it with imported labor. The use of thousands of foreign nationals is the big farmers' strategy to break the Union, as well as the higher wages secured for the farm workers by the Union.

If ever the challenge has been thrown to the farm workers in California, this is it. The brief-case farmers can be beaten at their game if all the farm workers will get behind the Union and take them on. Not only can the Union then stop the Mexican nationals but it can also get better wages and working conditions. This year is the crucial year. This year is the time to accomplish much.

Wages of $3.00 a Week Paid Wetbacks In California

Ernesto Galarza, Vice President of the National Farm Labor Union, reports that wages amounting to $3 a week and meals are being paid to Mexican aliens for farm work in California's rich Imperial Valley near the Mexican border. Galarza charges that some of the farm operators actually have entered into individual contracts with Mexican wetbacks providing for $3 cash plus a ration of beans, lard and flour. Wage rates for farm work now under way in the rich winter garden area are being "stabilized" at 60c an hour for Mexican nationals, legally in the country, and 40c for those who are here in violation of the laws of the United States and Mexico. However, checks are being cashed by merchants in Brawley, Calif., for wages of 25c an hour and less.

The U.S. Employment Service, violating its agreement to notify the National Farm Labor Union of requests for contract nationals from Mexico, approved the importation of 4,000 workers in November, 1950. 4,000 Mexican wetbacks are now being processed by officials of the U.S. Government and contracted out to growers in the Imperial Valley Farmers Association.

In the meantime, thousands of American workers are unemployed in the farm worker towns of Brawley, El Centro, Calexico, Calif., and in Yuma, Ariz. These farm workers find that there is no work for them. The 8,000 Mexican aliens are hired at wages of $3 a week to 60c an hour. A revolt against these conditions is brewing.

The National Farm Labor Union locals in the Imperial Valley have raised a demand for $1 per hour for farm work in this rich agricultural area as this is the average wage being paid throughout the rest of the state of California for farm work. The Union members feel that the thing to do is to raise the wages for all farm workers in the Imperial Valley and force the growers to recognize the Union and bargain collectively with their employees. Watch your newspapers and listen to the radio for things will soon be stirring in Southern California.

Union Insurance A Good Buy

Organizer William A. Swearingen of the National Farm Labor Union in Fresno, California decided to check up on the cost of a $250 life insurance policy if bought from a commercial insurance agent by an individual member. Here is what he found:

1. The commercial insurance companies will not issue life insurance policies to anyone over 55 years of age. The Union policy covers all members who are otherwise qualified, up to the age of 60 years at the time they join the Union.

2. If a man is 50 years of age a commercial insurance policy would cost him $1.43 per month which is more than some of the members of the National Farm Labor Union pay as dues each month. If a man took out a policy for $250 at the age af 55 from a commercial insurance agent, it would cost $2.08 a month which is more than the average member of the Union pays in dues.

3. If a man is 40 years of age the commercial policy would cost him $1.06 a month. If he were 30 years of age at the time he took out the policy it would cost him 86 cents a month.

The $250 insurance policy carried by the National Farm Labor Union on all of its members who are under 60 years of age and who have been in good and continuous standing for 3 or more months, is paid for from the share of membership dues sent by each local union to the National Office each month. The share of the dues sent to Washington for each member every month amounts to 75 cents. This is called per capita and the insurance policy for each member is paid for out of this. The National Farm Labor Union purchased the group insurance policy from the Union Labor Life Insurance Company of New York for all of its members.

There are hundreds of members who are now qualified but who have not made application for something which belongs to them. Part of the reason may be due to the over worked local union secretaries who have not gotten around to having each qualified member fill out his insurance data card. The data card is necessary as the policy cannot be issued unless each qualified member send in his full

FARM LABOR NEWS

The Farm Labor News is published monthly by the National Farm Labor Union A.F. of L.

Offices Room 825 Victor Bldg. 726 9th St., N. W., Washington 1, D. C.

Subscription rate 50c per year.

All members of the National Farm Labor Union are subscribers, payment for paper included in monthly dues.

Entered as a second class matter at the post office Washington D. C.

Annual Financial Report

(Continued from Page 1)

LIABILITIES AND SURPLUS

Current Liabilities		
Note Payable—Amalgamated Bank of New York.....	$ 900.00	
Per Capita Due—American Federation of Labor.....	372.00	
Accounts Payable	800.00	
Provision for Federal & D. C. Payroll Taxes.....	183.87	
Total Liabilities		$2,255.87
Surplus		
Balance—December 1, 1949.....	$5,584.35	
Deduct—Excess of Expenses over Income for (12) months period ended November 30, 1950 (Exhibit B)	1,898.92	
Balance—November 30, 1950.....		3,685.43
Total Liabilities and Surplus.....		$5,941.30

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
For 12 Months Ending November 30, 1950

Income		
Membership Dues	$44,286.78	
Contributions and Grants for Organization & Education	33,050.30	
Subscriptions—Farm Labor News.....	6.37	
Supplies Sold to Local Unions.....	249.15	
Total Income		$79,592.60
Expenses		
Office and Administration Expenses.....	$ 6,399.53	
Salaries, Officers, Organizers, Office Workers.....	20,084.91	
Per Capita Paid American Federation of Labor.....	3,798.00	
General Organization Expenses.....	30,805.07	
Legal Expenses	259.30	
Strike Expenses	484.74	
Publication and Mailing Costs—Farm Labor News....	1,556.45	
Educational Promotion and Expenses.....	1,482.65	
Convention Expenses	1,087.02	
Taxes—Social Security for Employees.....	744.20	
Insurance Premiums for Members.....	13,715.65	
Executive Board Meetings.....	1,074.00	
Total Expenses		81,491.52
Excess of Expenses Over Income (To Exhibit A).....		($1,898.92)

name, his date of birth, address, the name of his beneficiary, and indicates the relationship of the beneficiary to him. We believe that the reason many members have not received their policies is because they have failed to fill out an insurance data card, rather than because of any fault on the part of the local union secretary.

There are many other members who have paid their initiation fee and dues for a month or two without ever qualifying for their insurance policy. Many fail to pay their membership dues for months and then find that their insurance policy has been cancelled and their familes are unprotected.

As a result of the findings of organizer Swearingen, the local unions in California are putting on a campaign to see that every member is brought into good standing and that he or she gets an insurance policy. Each local union has agreed to do the following:

1. Make a list of members who have received their insurance policies and read this list at each meeting of the local union.

2. Mark each member's ledger entry and his dues book with the date on which his insurance data card is mailed to the National Office, so as to remind the member of the date when his membership dues are payable.

3. Ask every member having a policy to show it to other members and friends so that all will know about this Union benefit.

S. C. Kills Poll Tax

One bright light in the gloom of reaction which settled over the country November 7 shone in South Carolina.

There the citizens voted against retaining the poll tax as a requirement for voting.

That leaves only six states which require voters to pay the tax before they can ballot. They are Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennesse, Texas and Virginia.

Good Enough

"That's a bad cold you've got," said one man to another, who was sneezing violently.

"What are you taking for it?"

"Whiskey," was the reply.

"Whiskey. I know something better than that," said the man.

"But who wants anything better than that!" sniffed thesufferer.

How Dairy Farmers Increase Power by Organization

The National Farm Labor Union is rapidly organizing dairy farmers throughout the country. We are learning a lot about problems which we did not know existed. Our union, as its name implies, was set up primarily to organize the workers on the large scale farms of the nation. We have made considerable progress in organizing the employees of the suitcase farmers who own thousands of acres of land and hire hundreds of men to cultivate and harvest the crops. We began organizing dairy farmers quite by accident. We started in Louisiana two years ago where the International Brotherhood of Teamsters had two local unions of dairy farmers who wanted to join us, since we were the only A.F. of L. farm union. We helped those farmers build their organization. They have completed the most modern milk plant in the South, owned and operated by the members. With the help of organized labor in New Orleans these members of the Union boosted the prices received by farmers to the highest in the nation, $6.20 per CWT, without increasing the price of bottled milk to the consumer. Next, a group of dairy farmers in New York state heard about the Union and came to us with a request for organization. We set up 15 local unions in New York state. Then the dairymen in New Jersey came to us requesting organization by a bona fide labor union. Two locals have been formed in New Jersey, representing about one third of the state's dairy farmers. Near Pittsburgh, Pa. the small dairy farmers saw what happened when the AFL Milk Drivers and Dairy Employees were forced to strike for three weeks against the dairy trust. These farmers decided that they too should join an A.F. of L. union. About the same time, dairy farmers in the Duluth, Minn.—Superior, Wis. milkshed heard about the Union. They organized solidly 1,200 farmers and have union contracts, setting the price on the products of their labor. Over on the Iron Range of Minnesota a similar group of about 300 joined the Union and won contracts. Now the Union is organizing dairy farmers in Kentucky and Vermont. There are several thousand dairymen now in the National Farm Labor Union and a pattern for organization that may well affect the entire milk industry is emerging.

The National Farm Labor Union considers the Federal and State Marketing Orders regulating prices paid the farmer for the products of his labor just as industrial workers consider the minimum wage law which places a floor on wages as merely the starting point for collective bargaining.

In each area where the Union has organized dairy farmers, such organization has been brought into existence in cooperation with other American Federation of Labor affiliates. The trade unions represent the only organized segment of the consuming public. Wherever we have negotiated contracts or entered into other arrangements which secured increased prices for our dairy farm members, the consumers represented by the A. F. of L. have been consulted and their advice followed.

The huge profits accumulated by National Dairies, Borden and other independent sections of the dairy trust come largely from the sale of non-fluid milk utilized in manufactured products. Any increase in prices to farmers approved by the marketing order is usually immediately reflected in the price of bottled milk to the consumer. The task of the National Farm Labor Union and the trade union movement representing the organized consumer is to see that the companies disgorge a part of their profits in the form of better prices to union members and do not raise the price of bottled milk and blame it on the demands of the farmers. We realize that this is a difficult task but we believe it can be done by education of both the producer and the consumer organized in the labor movement. This educational program has already begun. Dairymen who are members of the Union are learning the facts about their own business through attendance at milk hearings in large numbers; by attending their local union meetings; discussing matters among themselves; and by meeting the distributors at the bargaining table. What is more, the representatives of the union local who now sit in the central labor unions are educating other trade unionists about a problem which vitally affects both.

We believe that this pattern of organization and collective bargaining will stabilize the milk industry. We think it is probable that union collective bargaining agreements may in the future eliminate the various classifications based on the use of milk. The goal of securing for members of the Union a single set price for the product of his labor, may also be within the realms of possibility.

Some of the large national farm organizations are quite concerned about a labor union organizing farmers. We would point out that the dairy farmers would never have sought the assistance of the labor movement if the national farm organizations initiated a realistic program to improve the conditions under which these farmers operate. The farm organizations have performed signal services for farmers generally by securing legislation and conducting educational programs. However, they have not carried on a day-to-day struggle for their members on a local level. It may well be that they have grown too rich and powerful and have lost the fighting spirit that brought them into being. To those who are concerned about the National Farm Labor Union's efforts to increase the bargaining power of dairy farmers through organization, we call attention to the fact that there are over 750,000 commercial milk producers in the United States and many of these farmers know they are not getting a square deal. They believe that they are entitled to a larger portion of the huge profits being made by the dairy industry.

DAIRYMEN'S NEWS

Milk Producers Organize In Old Kentucky

Over 300 dairy farmers in the Louisville, Ky. milkshed met at Simpsonville on December 11, to form a local of the National Farm Labor Union. Indication of the great interest shown was evidenced by a large attendance even though a snow storm raged outside.

Attending and addressing the meeting were I. Lee Parker, representative of the National Farm Labor Union and Edward H. Weyler, Secretary of the Kentucky Federation of Labor. Weyler charged that Louisville dairies had recently increased the price of milk to the consumer 1 cent a quart without giving the farmers a price increase.

James M. Russell was named President of the newly formed Dairy Farmers Union; Earl Smith was chosen as the Vice President; and Paul Kelly, Secretary-Treasurer. Among the problems facing the new union of dairy farmers in the Louisville area is the existence of the Falls City Milk Producers Co-operative Association designated as the official bargaining agent for the farmers in the milkshed. The "co-op" collects 4 cents per 100 wt. from the producer who is a member and 5 cents from the farmer who is a non-member. Members of the "co-op" do not vote individually on amendments to the Federal Milk Control Order setting minimum prices they receive for the products of their labor. The vote of the members of the "co-op" is cast by the secretary under provisions of the Capper-Volstead Act which governs farmers' co-operative marketing agencies.

I. Lee Parker, organizer for the National Farm Labor Union, said, "This is the most undemocratic method I ever heard of and it is no wonder that the dairymen are in revolt against an organization they believe to be controlled by National Dairies."

Farmers are constantly being told of high fees and dues charged by labor unions but no organization affiliated with the American Federation of Labor charges dues as high as those deducted from the farmers' milk checks in Louisville. Dues of $40 a month or more are common in the Falls City Milk Co-op. No labor union officer would dare cast the vote of his entire membership on matters affecting the union members' wages or working conditions. Dictatorship by the milk bosses is real in Louisville. The dairy farmers in Louisville appear to have as much to say about their business as do farmers or workers in Communist Russia.

The entry of the National Farm Labor Union into the Louisville milkshed has been welcomed by the following leading editorial published in the Louisville Courier-Journal.

The news that a trade union of dairy farmers is being promoted in this milkshed touches on one of the main concerns of Louisville families. We are not going to be drawn into a discussion of the merits of unionism in this field, or the probable effect of a new pressure on the supply or the retail price. But we do hope that whatever comes of the present movement for organization under the banner of the American Federation of Labor, it will start an airing of the whole subject of milk prices and how they are fixed.

It is one of the most complicated and generally unintelligible operations in the book of food production and distribution. We sympathize with the rank and file of dairy farmers in their bewilderment at what goes on in the industry. And we sympathize particularly with consumers, few of whom have the faintest idea of who gets what.

Dairy Farmers Go To Washington

Organizer John L. Banks of Superior, Wisconsin, Ray Strand and Eino Ulvi of Duluth went to Washington the week before Christmas to lay the problems of the dairy farmers in their milkshed before the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The dairy farmers were accompanied by the Union attorney, Gerald Heany of Duluth. Appointments had been made with the dairy division for a joint meeting of the Union representatives and dealers to discuss the Union contracts recently negotiated by Local 293 of the National Farm Labor Union. The Union represents the 1,200 commercial producers in the Duluth-Superior milkshed and has contracts with all of the milk handlers. There had been threats to withdraw the Federal Order as a result of the signing of the Union contracts which provide for a 90 cents increase in the price of fluid milk, above the minimum set by the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the area.

Officials of the dairy branch, which the dairy farmers pronounced as being entirely out of sympathy with the producers and definitely on the side of the dairy trust, said the contract would not work and the farmers should not organize into a labor union. Then one of the slick lawyers in the dairy branch who knew it all, happened to read the contract. A provision had been written into it which stated that in the event the Federal Order was withdrawn, the contract would be null and void. The contract was just like an industrial union contract. The Union took the Federal Order to be a minimum wage for the dairy farmer, and anything the dairymen could negotiate by collective bargaining above the minimum, as the way the Federal regulation should work. Consternation arose in the USDA dairy branch. The lawyer for the Department said, "If we approve the contract we are responsible, if we pull the order we are also responsible." The Dairy Division would not permit the Duluth-Superior Marketing Administrator to make the computations of the blend price paid the farmer, nor would they permit him to make the payments to the dairy farmers for the products of their labor. They also said that the order might be withdrawn without a public hearing. But the show was not over for the dairy farmers who had come to Washington. H. L. Mitchell, President of the National Farm Labor Union, and his special assistant, Gardner Jackson, had quietly arranged an appointment for the representatives of Dairy Farmers Union Local 293 with the boss of the Department of Agriculture, Secretary Charles F. Brannan.

Banks, Strand and Ulvi, accompanied by Atorney Heany, Ed Mitchell, H. L. Mitchell, Congressman John Blatnix and Gardner Jackson, called on the Secretary of Agriculture. Although Mr. Brannan was very busy with the annual crop report which was being issued that afternoon, he found time to see the dairy farmers and hear their side of the story. The dairy farmers found that the "man at the top" in the huge Department of Agriculture was the friend of the little man on the farm. Secretary Brannan told the group that the fact that they had organized into a labor union had nothing whatever to do with the situation, that it was his job to see that the Department of Agriculture served the interests of all producers. The following day a letter was sent to the group by Secretary Brannan saying that the Federal Order regulating milk prices in Duluth and Superior would not be set aside without a public hearing.

After the meeting with Secretary Brannan, the group met the newspaper men at Senator Humphrey's office and told them their story of the two kinds of officials in the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

La. Dairy Farmers On Strike

Members of Dairy Farmers Local 278 in Louisiana are on strike against the Bogalusa Dairy Products Co. following refusal of the company to abide by their contract with the Union.

The Dairy Products Co. has gone into court asking an injunction to stop the farmers from picketing the plant. They have also requested the court to order a contract entered into by the Union with the C. A. Stewart Dairy Co. set aside.

I. Lee Parwer, representative of the National Farm Labor Union in Louisiana, announced that the local and national union will fight the proposed injunction through the courts. The right of an American citizen to protest a grievance is involved in the attempt to prevent lawful picketing.

Vt. Dairy Farmers Organize Union

Three preliminary meetings were held in the state of Vermont by Organizer L. N. Gregory during the last week in October for the purpose of organizing dairy farmers. All meetings were heavily attended by the slick-haired, brief-case boys representing the Metropolitan Co-operative Milk Producers Bargaining Agency, Inc., the local dealers, feed merchants, and others who had no use for a fighting union in their midst. A full report was made to the Metropolitan Milk Producers News published in Syracuse, N. Y., by field man John C. Fienman who apparently attended the meetings along with a reporter from the Burlington Free Press. The Farm Labor News is indebted to Fienman and the Free Press for their account of what took place at the meetings. Here is what happened:

At Morrisville on October 25, 75 persons, most of whom were dairy farmers, heard L. N. Gregory explain the Union program and method of operation. An invitation was given to those eligible to join the Union. No one took the first step. There were too many outsiders to suit the independent Vermont dairy farmers. The next meeting was held at the GAR hall in Underhill and about 50 persons were present. This time Gregory knew who the outsiders were so he closed the meeting after announcing his business in Vermont. The third meeting at Enosburg lasted somewhat longer the following night when about 100 persons gathered together in the Parish Hall. Among those attending all three meetings was Bert Picard of St. Johnsburg who had arranged for the Union organizer to come to Vermont. Gregory's job at an end so he returned to his work and Picard carried on the job of organizing. The next meeting held in Enosburg, Vt., resulted in the establishment of a local union composed of 85 charter members. The officers of the new Milk Producers Local No. 309 are as follows: Mitchell Bresettet, President; Clarence Juckett, Vice President; Joseph Tetreault, Secretary-Treasurer; and Martin Couture, Recording Secretary.

We suggest that the Milk Producers News and the Burlington Free Press now print the results in Vermont as they are.

Nothing in It for Him

A very little boy came home dejected from his first day at school.

"Ain't goin' tomorrow," he said.

"Why not, dear?"

"Well, I can't read 'n' I can't write 'n' they won't let me talk—so what's the use?"